

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7316

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DEPT PLEASE PASS MORRIS PALADINO, AAFLI-WASHINGTON, FROM WEAST

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, IN

SUBJECT: AAFLI

1. MET WITH FINANCE MINISTER SUBRAMANIAM FOR ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES MORNING MARCH FIVE.

2. I OPENED MEETING BY CONGRATULATING HIM ON HIS ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF INDIA'S LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION TO RELAX ATMOSPHERE AND BRING TO HIS ATTENTION MY SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION, A.L. RAI, AND INDIAN ATTORNEY WHOM WE MIGHT REPEAT MIGHT WANT TO ENGAGE TO REPRESENT US IN NEGOTIATIONS TO OPEN A PERMANENT OFFICE.

3. I EXPLAINED I AM LEAVING FOR AAFLI CONFERENCE, THAT GERDA WILL BE HERE, THAT HE CAN REACH ME THROUGH HER, THAT I EXPECT TO RETURN TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS TO OPEN A PERMANENT OFFICE AND THAT I HAD HAD AN INDICATION FROM THE FOREIGNERS REGIONAL REGISTRATION OFFICE THAT IT WOULD SUPPORT MY VISA APPLICATION. HE ADDED THAT THE LABOUR MINISTRY WOULD ALSO BE CONSULTED ON THE VISA APPLICATION.

4. AT THIS REQUEST I DESCRIBED AAFLI OPERATIONS, CONCENTRATING ON PRESENT AND FUTURE PROGRAMS WITH PERUMAL'S UNION. I MENTIONED AFL-CIO AND AID FUNDING, EMPHASIZING CONTROL OF PROGRAMS AND
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INDEPENDENT POLICY OF FORMER. I DOCUMENTED THIS POINT BY ALLUDING

TO PRESIDENT MEANY'S WELL-KNOWN PROPENSITY TO DISAGREE WITH U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL WHENEVER HE BELIEVED IT TO WRONG, ILLUSTRATING THE POINT WITH A REFERENCE TO THE DIFFERENCE OF AFL/CIO-U.S. GOVERNMENT POSITIONS VIS-A-VIS INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICT NINETEEN SEVENTY-ONE.

5. SUBRAMANIAM ASKED WHETHER I HAD STARTED NEGOTIATIONS WITH AN INDIAN MINISTRY. I REPLIED IN NEGATIVE, THAT AAFLI AND I WERE AMERICAN AND NEEDED EXPERT INDIAN ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE. THEREFORE, THROUGH OUR MUTUAL FRIEND PERUMAL, I HAD COME TO HIM. HE THEN SAID THAT WE WOULD NEED A SPONSORING MINISTRY, WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE THE LABOR MINISTRY. I HINTED DISCRETELY AT POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES THERE AND, OBVIOUSLY GRASPING MY MEANING AND ALSO WITHOUT MENTIONING THE LABOR MINISTER, HE SAID FOR THAT REASON WE WOULD NEED INTUC SPONSORSHIP REPEAT SPONSORSHIP, ASKING IF I HAD APPROACHED BHAGAVATI ON THIS. I REPLIED IN AFFIRMATIVE AND SAID BHAGAVATI HAD INDICATED A NUMBER OF FACTORS, ONE OF WHICH IS POLITICAL, IN THE WAY OF INTUC'S SPONSORSHIP AT THE PRESENT TIME DESPITE OUR WARM FRACTERNAL RELATIONS.

6. I MENTIONED THE INCREASINGLY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP OF HMS TO THE CONGRESS PARTY, THAT THE PROSPECTS OF AN OFFICIAL WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH HMS SEEMED RATHER GOOD TO ME AT PRESENT AND ASKED WHETHER HMS SPONSORSHIP, IF FORTHCOMING, MIGHT TURN THE TRICK. HE REPLIED THAT INTUC HAS A LOT MORE CLOUT AND COULD OVERCOME LABOR MINISTRY RESISTANCE. I REPLIED THAT HAD BEEN MY IMPRESSION, WHICH HE, AN AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE, HAD JUST CONFIRMED, BUT AGAIN RAISED THE QUESTION OF WHETHER HMS SPONSORSHIP COULD RESULT IN SUCCESS, IF INTUC SPONSORSHIP NOT FORTHCOMING. HE REPLIED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.

7. SUBRAMANIAM SAID HE WOULD TALK TO INTUC GENERAL SECRETARY RAMANUJAM ABOUT THIS MATTER. I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION, SUGGESTING THAT I AGAIN REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT WITH HIM ON MY RETURN TO INDIA AFTER AAFLI CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS RESULTS OF HIS TALK WITH RAMANUJAM AND TO ASK HIS ADVICE ABOUT WHAT TO DO NEXT. HE AGREED WITH THIS SUGGESTION.

8. SUBRAMANIAM TOLD ME HE IS A FORMER TRADE UNIONIST. HE WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VISIBLY IMPRESSED BY WHAT WE ARE DOING WITH PERUMAL AND I CAME AWAY WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WILL HELP IF HE CAN. THE SALIENT POINTS WHICH EMERGED FROM THIS INTERVIEW ARE SUBRAMANIAM'S EVIDENT BELIEF THAT SUCCESS OF ESTABLISHING OFFICE WITH INTUC SPONSORSHIP IS HIGHLY PROBABLE AND THAT SUCCESS MIGHT COME ABOUT BUT IS DISTINCTLY LESS PROBABLE WITH THAT OF HMS. WEAST END QUOTE.

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